

REMARKS

The Examiner has imposed a restriction requirement, and requested that Applicants elect one of two identified groups of claims for prosecution in connection with the present application.

The groups of claims are as follows:

- I. Claims 1-8 and 12, drawn to a method of producing biogas by anaerobic digestion of organic matter.
- II. Claims 9-11 and 13, drawn to a device for producing biogas by anaerobic digestion of organic matter.

The Examiner alleges that Groups I and II do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical feature, specifically, requiring contacting the slurry with biogas-producing bacteria of Group I.

Initially, Applicants note that claim 9 has been amended to include this special technical feature. Applicants thus have grouped the inventions to relate to a single general inventive concept and have the same special technical features.

As such, Group II has been merged into Group I. Since the restriction requirement based on PCT Rules 13.1 and 13.2 has now been overcome, Applicants respectfully request that claims 1-13 be examined in the present application. Applicants elect Group I **with traverse**. However, as stated above, implicit within Applicant's election of Group I (claims 1-8 and 12) is an election of Group II (claims 9-11 and 13).

CONCLUSION

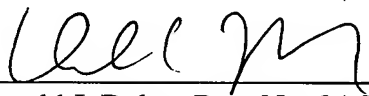
Applicants respectfully request that this application be examined on the merits at the earliest possible time.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Erin G. Hoffman, Reg. No. 57,752, at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2548 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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